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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to determine whether or not the teachers in a rural Georgia elementary school believed that a strict dress-code or student-uniform policy was needed to improve student behavior. A 20-item Likert Scale questionnaire was developed to measure teachers' feelings and/or beliefs concerning the students' dress code and effects on student behavior. This questionnaire was distributed to 44 teachers who taught grades 3, 4, and 5. Chi-square analyses were performed on the 41 returned surveys. Of the 20 questionnaire items, 18 showed a significant difference in the teachers' responses. Also, the percentage of responses marked "strongly agree" or "agree" was higher on 15 of the items. These 15 items upheld the hypothesis favoring a strict dress code. Teachers perceived that students would behave better and work harder on academics if they were dressed professionally. Results may be used as a further indication that dress-code policies may aid schools in improving student behavior. The survey and results are appended. (Contains 59 references.) (MLH/Author)

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE EFFECT UNIFORMS OR STRICT DRESS CODES HAVE ON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine whether or not the teachers in a rural public elementary school located in central Georgia believed that a strict dress code or student uniform policy was needed to improve student behavior. A 20-item alternate form Likert Scale questionnaire was developed by the researcher to measure the teachers' feelings and/or beliefs regarding the students' dress code and the effect on students' behavior. This questionnaire was distributed to the 44 teachers who taught at the elementary school (grades 3,4, and 5) in central Georgia. Chi-square analyses were performed on the 41 returned surveys. Of the 20 questionnaire items, 18 showed a significant difference in the teachers responses. Also, the percentage of responses marked strongly agree or agree was higher on 15 of the 20 items. These 15 items upheld the hypothesis that teachers perceived student behavior to be significantly improved if a strict student dress code was implemented. Results of this study may be used as a further indication that dress code policies may aid schools in improving student behavior.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

In the 1995 Public Agenda Foundation survey report, "First Things First: What Americans Expect from the Public Schools", it was revealed that parents and community members want public schools that are safe, orderly and emphasize the basics (Cohn, 1996). President Clinton sees the need for school uniforms to help keep schools safe. Educators indicate the foremost problem in education is discipline. One unruly student can, for as long as he/she is able to keep it up, affect the climate of a classroom (Buckley, 1996).

There is now a nationwide trend to adopt stricter dress and grooming codes. There is a connection between the way students dress and the way they behave. In some public schools, even uniforms are being worn. Those for uniforms argue that students have grown so fashion conscious that they are distracted from their studies and that the popular clothing has become so expensive their families are being economically squeezed by peer pressure. Uniforms are a source of affiliation. School uniforms produce an "espirit de corps" among students at school (Myers, 1990).

Schools need a calm, business like atmosphere in which

absenteeism is reduced and academic performance increased (Luesch, 1995). Dress codes cut down on distractions that keep students from concentrating on their lessons. Uniforms increase students self-confidence. Uniforms can improve classroom behavior and remove some of the causes of school crime, violence, and gang activity (Myers, 1990). As horrifying as it may be to face the fact that young people have killed others to possess an item of clothing or footwear, it is equally mystifying that young people spend large sums of money on these type items, with the endorsement or acquiescence of their parents (Pugh, 1990).

Uniforms help establish a sense of discipline without which, there would be no education. For inner-city schools, uniforms decrease school crime. Dress codes and uniforms help smother violence (Forbes, 1990).

In New Zealand, children in public schools wear uniforms. The uniforms make school serious, rich and poor children look alike, and students have strong school spirit. Adults openly discuss behaviors that disgrace the school uniforms (Jarchow, 1992). Uniforms are democratic: regardless of background, no student stands out because of his or her clothing. They help students focus on school work and help reduce violence. They decrease the influence of gangs and help identify outsiders. They

reinforce the principle: judge people by their character not their appearance (Forbes, 1994).

Uniform supporters see a need for a greater sense of pride in the community; school uniforms can help establish this pride. Wearing a school uniform encourages positive friendships, school loyalty, and school identification. It has a democratizing effect: students have to distinguish themselves by merit, not by the expense or style of their clothing (Caldas, 1993).

Uniforms are no panacea, however there are indications uniforms can foster an atmosphere of pride and discipline in troubled schools. Despite assertions by some that mandatory uniforms are unconstitutional, the U.S. Supreme Court has never ruled on such policies (Callaghan, 1994).

Critics of school uniforms say young people already have enough restrictions put on them without adding another. However forgoing personal style seven hours a day is a small price to pay for safer hallways, fewer drugs, less racial tension, and an overall better learning environment.

Critics of dress codes say a dress code is nothing more than a subtle harassment of students; a power struggle to force students to follow school rules. Critics claim dress codes cause economic hardships for families who can

not afford them (Cameron, 1990).

Another argument against the wearing of uniforms is they give students no freedom of choice. Discipline does not depend on how a student is dressed. Requiring uniforms will not help teach students to become the independent thinkers of tomorrow, and that is the major goal of education (Evans, 1987).

In the uniformed schools in Long Beach, California student safety is a priority. Gang clothing is virtually nonexistent. Uniforms go a long way toward providing a neutral coat of arms for children whose clothing might otherwise make them targets. Uniforms allow easy and immediate identification of outsiders who do not belong on campus. Teachers and parents believe that uniforms help foster a professional outlook for students. School is seen as a workplace for teaching and learning. In the 1930's and 40's, Long Beach High School students wore uniforms. This confirms the notion that there really is little that is new in education today. Hundreds of local charities and individuals have come forward to offer support to indigent families in the community, thus making sure all students have uniforms (Cohn, 1996).

This research indicated that teachers in a rural elementary school in central Georgia perceived there would

be less negative student behavior if a strict dress code or uniform policy was implemented.

Statement of the Problem

Did teachers perceive that student behavior would improve with a strict dress code or uniform policy?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to decide if a stricter dress code or voluntary uniform policy was needed to help students improve behavior.

Statement of the Hypothesis

Teachers perceived student behavior would when a stricter dress code or voluntary uniform policy was implemented.

Definitions of Terms

Esprit de corps

Esprit de corps is a common spirit of enthusiasm and devotion to a cause among members of a group.

Elementary School

A school in which the only grades are third, fourth, and fifth. Students range in age from eight to eleven.

Perceptions

Insights or knowledge gained through experiences.

Student behavior

The way students exhibit themselves in the school environment. This includes how students relate to each other, their teachers, and administrators.

Strict dress codes

Mandatory requirements for clothing at school.

Voluntary uniform policy

A policy by a school to have students volunteer to wear a certain type of clothing. This policy is more formal than a strict dress code.

Assumptions

One assumption made by the researcher concerning this study was that the 41 teachers who responded to the questionnaire did so truthfully and their opinions are based on the beliefs for the better educational environment of their students.

Limitations

The researcher was conducting this study in one small, rural elementary school and this did not represent a random sample. These results cannot be generalized or expected in other elementary, middle, or high schools. Other schools are in different locations, are of different size, and have

different demographics. There was a lack of scientific research articles regarding this topic due to the fact that uniform/strict dress code policies are a new trend in public school education. Most articles found were from school systems that had implemented uniforms policies. Many articles repeated the information already found. Most articles were from the administrators' perceptions of how uniforms worked in their schools. There were not enough articles from the teacher's perspective.

Significance of the Study

This research showed that many problems faced by the students in public schools resulted from the clothing or the lack of certain clothing worn to school. Uniforms or strict dress codes would eliminate many of these problems. Teachers believed that when students concentrated on positive behaviors associated with getting an education in public schools, all aspects of education improved, and what to wear became insignificant. Therefore, this study contributed to the growing belief in public school education that uniform or strict dress code policies should be required.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Many public schools across the United States have adopted student uniforms or strict dress code policies to help eliminate the many problems associated with public schools. The literature was some what limited. Before the 1990's, school uniforms were worn only in private, usually parochial, schools and not much was written about them.

Since 1994 student uniforms have been used in public schools to help stop gang violence, to help students' concentrate on their studies, to save parents money on clothing, to help identify trespassers on school property and to heighten school pride. Magazine articles from Eric Document Reproduction Service and newspaper articles agree with educators that uniforms do help diminish these problems, but that uniforms alone do not solve these problems.

Literature Review

The Manual on School Uniforms published by the U.S. Department of Education (1996) stated that a safe and disciplined learning environment is the first requirement of a good school. Young people who are safe and secure, who learn basic American values and the essentials of good

citizenship, are better students. In response to growing levels of violence in our schools, many parents, teachers, and school officials have come to see school uniforms as one positive and creative way to reduce discipline problems and increase school safety. Benefits of school uniforms include: decreasing violence and theft, preventing gang members from wearing gang colors and insignia, instilling discipline in students, helping parents and students resist peer pressure, helping students concentrate on their school work, and helping school officials recognize intruders. School uniform policies have been enacted in many states, including California, Georgia, Virginia, and Tennessee. Many large public school systems have either voluntary or mandatory uniform policies in elementary and middle schools. Many private and parochial schools have required uniforms for a number of years. The decision to adopt a uniform policy is made by states, local school districts, and the individual schools.

In Long Beach, California uniforms are mandatory in all elementary and middle schools. Long Beach was the first major U.S. city to make uniforms standard dress for its public schools (Kennedy, 1994). This program includes approximately 59,000 students. School district officials state that in the first year of wearing uniforms, overall

school crime decreased 31 percent. Fights decreased 51 percent, sex offenses decreased 74 percent, weapon offenses decreased 50 percent, assault and battery offenses decreased 34 percent and vandalism decreased 18 percent. This saved $100,000 per year in the district (Poliokas, 1996).

At South Shore Middle School in Seattle, Washington, 900 students wear mandatory uniforms. Demeanor in the school has improved, truancy and tardiness are down and there were no reports of theft. A voluntary uniform policy at Maymont Elementary School in Richmond, Virginia, has 85 percent of its 262 students participating. Principal Sylvia Richardson identifies many benefits from the uniform program including an increase in attendance rates and higher student achievement. At George Washington Carver Elementary School in Kansas City, Missouri, 320 students wear mandatory uniforms. The principal Philomina Harshaw has observed a new sense of calmness throughout the school. The children feel good about themselves and have an increased a sense of pride. A voluntary uniform policy at Douglas Elementary School in Memphis, Tennessee, has 90 percent of its 532 students wearing uniforms. According to guidance counselor Sharon Carter, there is no longer the competitiveness, about who wears what (U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

Before implementing uniforms, Whitter Elementary in Long Beach, California, had one of the lowest attendance records in the district. After three years of uniforms, its record is among the highest (Fadden, 1996).

In Kansas City, Missouri, the reputation of Martin Luther King Middle School was among the lowest in the city. After four years of required uniforms as part of its Latin Grammar Magnet program, the school has shown a dramatic turn around in attendance, scores, and school pride (Fadden, 1996).

At Granger Junior High, in Jolee, Kansas, administrators have seen nothing but a positive impact on students since the introduction of uniforms. Attendance has gone up, grades have significantly improved, and incidents of physical violence have greatly diminished. Students are calmer, more polite and ethnic and racial tensions have diminished. School is seen as a safe haven with a calming effect. Students are better behaved and look forward to coming to school. With students getting along better, grades improving, and absenteeism dropping, it seems uniforms are making school a better place to learn (Fadden, 1996).

Many school officials see uniforms as magic. At the lower grades, dress codes and uniforms help to control

classroom behavior and keep children focused on learning. At the middle and high school level, uniforms are used to keep students from fighting over the latest fashions and to eliminate gang related clothing and symbols.

When groups of students start assaulting other students or creating an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, they become a gang. Groups of students reach gang status when their behavior either individually or collectively is disruptive, antisocial, or criminal.

Gang clothing including handkerchiefs, specific colored shoelaces, heavy gold jewelry, and distinctive dress are banned in most schools. Implementing a gang prevention program early on in the elementary school in order to hinder gang influences is important. Banning expensive jewelry and designer clothing promotes student safety and eliminates the possibility of students becoming victims of violent theft. School uniforms and strict dress codes eliminate the opportunity for students to dress according to the most fashionable trends and decrease socio-economic discrimination (Aaland, 1995).

The Oakland, California, Board of Education has banned clothing and jewelry denoting identification with a gang, expensive jogging suits frequently worn by gang members and drug dealers, and all hats and headgear and clothing

designating membership in non-school organizations. The Detroit, Michigan, City Schools have implemented a complete ban on expensive clothes and jewelry. The Dallas, Texas, Board of Education has adopted a policy opposing clothing and grooming that is deemed distracting or disruptive. While dress codes remain controversial as a means of controlling unwanted behaviors, proponents suggest that these guidelines result in fewer behavioral problems and a safer academic environment. Policies must be clearly stated, issued with reasonable notice to allow students to comply, and allow for minimal due process before students are disciplined for violations (Landen, 1992).

At Cardinal Hayes High School in New York, 85 percent of the students are minorities. Eighty-five percent of its graduates go on to college compared with less than 15 percent in comparable public schools with an identical composite of students. The principal attributes this to their school uniforms. The uniform identifies the student as a member of the school community. Students are expected to be in uniform, be punctual and behave in an orderly fashion. They do! Only two percent of the students at Cardinal Hayes are expelled (Buckley, 1996).

Preventing gang activity at Northbrooke Middle School in Houston, Texas, involved establishing a school dress

code, the police issuing tickets for fights, having no more than three students walking together in the hall, and confiscating outward indications of gang affiliations, such as bandannas, pacifiers, and certain types of jewelry. Immediate documentation and removal of all graffiti also helped. Book covers, notebooks and school work covered with graffiti were confiscated (Adanni-Norton, 1996).

At Fordham Prep School in the Bronx, students wear a jacket, tie, pants, and dress shoes. This fosters a degree of seriousness not found at other schools. These students will not find it hard to put on appropriate clothing when it's time to enter the real work world (Golson, 1995).

In Dade County, Florida, parents at 46 schools voted to required uniforms for their children in 1996, and almost 80 other schools opted for voluntary uniform policies. Dade County schools that require uniforms also must provide financial assistance to help low-income students buy them. Students in about a third of Los Angeles elementary schools now wear uniforms (Gursky, 1996).

Thirteen Chatham County, Georgia schools initiated a voluntary uniform policy in 1996. This year students are required to have clear or mesh book bags. The district is hoping the policy will improve discipline (Muller, 1996).

School officials in Dougherty County, Georgia, saw that voluntary uniforms were popular with elementary school students. School Superintendent John Culbreath sees an association with good behavior and deportment that comes with the wearing of uniforms (Wesselman, 1996).

In 1994, Edward Guerra became principal at Farragut High School in Chicago. He greatly enlarged the security system and put a school uniform policy into affect. The uniform prescribed is a white top with black trousers or skirts. This innovation is said to have helped produce a 100 percent drop in violence at Farragut. However, at DuSable High School, also in Chicago, the Principal Charles Mingo regards school uniforms with distaste. He sees uniforms as an unwelcome reminder of prison uniforms that are a real possibility for young men in this part of the city (Dohohue, 1996).

Students at D.M. Pinkerton Latin Magnet Schools in Kansas City, Missouri, were required to wear uniforms to school every day. The district provided each student with two uniforms. Additional uniforms could also be purchased. Teachers and parents rated the school environment positively and teachers indicted that student achievement had improved. 97 percent of all students were observed in their uniforms. However, students were dissatisfied with

their uniforms and saw no effect on their behavior (Robinson, 1991).

Those who believe individualism comes from external factors are mistaken. For teenagers, individualism often gets lost in their desire to conform - in style of dress, hairdos, and even behavior. Nothing is as devastating to an insecure teenager as the thought that he or she is not accepted by the peer group. That acceptance is often based on dress. If public schools required students to wear uniforms, the amount of energy and time spent trying to imitate their peers would be reduced, leaving more of both for the pursuits for which our educational systems are designed. Students would be able to establish relationships on a foundation more stable and long-lasting than appearance. Uniforms would eliminate the clothing competitiveness and tremendous clothing expense. Uniforms would give students a good start at establishing a more realistic value system (Gunter, 1987).

Physical appearance is an important variable in the perceiver's judgment of an individual's character and abilities. A halo effect appears to be operating, whereby an attractive person is perceived as more sociable as well as more accomplished. Clothing is a critical component of person perception. Physical appearance influences students'

perception of the leadership ability of their peers. Research has shown that the halo effect produced by clothing occurs at an early age. Significantly higher perceived academic potential occurs when students dress in suits or "preppy" style clothing. Stricter dress codes are based on the perception that typical fashionable clothing can be distracting in an academic environment. School uniforms positively influence the perception of school-related behavior by both peers and teachers. Clothing can produce a halo effect whereby students in school uniforms are seen as better behaved, higher academic achievers and having more academic potential (Behling, 1994).

Principals and teachers say that uniforms are making students more successful. There are fewer absences, less tardies, fewer truancies, fewer referrals to the office for behavior problems, fewer suspensions and expulsions, better grades, and significantly higher achievement. Uniforms, combined with other reforms such as renewed emphasis upon basic skills, student accountability, and respect for others, should substantially improve the learning environment. Uniforms improve discipline, self-esteem, and self-respect. Requiring uniforms enhances school security by permitting identification of non-students who try to

enter the campus. Weapons cannot be concealed the way they are in jumpsuits, overcoats and baggy gang clothing. Uniforms help create unity amid diversity by easing ethnic and cultural tensions and encouraging values of tolerance and civility. Uniforms bridge differences between students and families of widely disparate income levels. Over the years, schools have increasingly become a distracting forum for factionalism, ethnic rivalry, and socio-economic class divisions.

Politicians, appalled by the wave of status-conscious children getting mugged and even killed for designer accessories, see the need for uniforms. In Chicago, even preteenage children were having a fashion competition over Air Jordans, designer jeans, and starter jackets. Students' clothing was being stolen off their backs and sometimes the victims were killed in the process. Public inner-city schools have turned to uniforms to help stop the problem of clothing theft. Uniforms are voluntary and consist of navy slacks, skirts, or jumpers, with a white shirt and even ties for the boys (Time, Jan '90). Many families recognized one immediate benefit: they would not have to buy so many expensive clothes for their fashion conscious children. For families on welfare, uniforms would make an economic difference.

The 28th annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup poll released in August of 1996 surveyed 1,329 adults on a broad range of education issues. Fifty-three percent favored uniforms for public school students (The Albany Herald, 1996).

Carl Cohn, Superintendent of Long Beach Unified School District, says parents deserve the credit for making uniforms work so well. Parents requested school uniforms. Parents overwhelmingly support school uniforms. Parents daily send their children to school dressed for success and ready to learn.

In 1995, California passed a law allowing the state's school districts to implement mandatory dress codes. In one year, overall school crime dropped 36 percent among the 58,000 middle-schoolers in Long Beach Unified School District: fighting dropped 50 percent, assault and battery dropped 34 percent, and vandalism dropped 18 percent. Student suspensions fell by about a third (Garsky, 1996).

The school uniform, long the "plaid province" of Catholic school children, has gone to public schools. Former Education Secretary and conservative pundit William Bennett has argued for public school conformity.

Uniforms have won strong support from Attorney General Janet Reno. Reno says we should stand behind schools that try uniforms to help stop school violence. Schools are

embracing dress codes to protect students from clothing-conscious gangs and criminals. In some cities, students have been gunned down for a jacket or pair of sneakers (U.S. News & World Report,Dec 95). Hillary Rodham Clinton in her book, *It Takes a Village*, writes, "I find it hard to understand why energy is spent on litigating that could be used to raise money for uniforms or to take on some other school problems." President Clinton credits his wife with convincing him to support school uniforms. President Clinton, in a memorandum to the Secretary of Education, said that we must do everything possible to provide a safe and secure school environment where values of discipline, hard work and study, responsibility, and respect could be passed to our students. All of our schools should be permitted to focus on their original purpose: education. School uniforms are an important part of an overall program to improve school safety and discipline. If student uniforms can help deter school violence, promote discipline, and foster a better learning environment, then we should offer our strong support. School uniforms are just one of the many initiatives undertaken by local school officials and parents to improve school safety and discipline (Weekly Computation of Presidential Documents March 1996).

Critics accuse schools of taking a simplistic approach to school violence, one that infringes on students' rights and perhaps even takes on shades of racism: most codes single out "gang" clothing that has emerged from the urban black culture. Supporters say that doing away with gang-related clothing will reduce fighting over real or imagined slights between students, while making the classes more businesslike. School uniforms will level the playing field in classrooms by removing the messages of social and economic status carried in clothes; uniforms tailored to individual schools may enhance a school's sense of community and students' self-esteem (Economist, 1994).

Critics contend that when a uniform is required, discipline measures will be needed for students who don't wear their uniform or wear a dirty or torn uniform. Requiring uniforms would not help us better educate our students. Discipline would not be improved. Uniforms would develop a new set of discipline problems (Evans, 1987).

Critics also agree that elementary school children are not as concerned as high schoolers with issues such as individuality and personal rights and do not view required uniforms as intrusive or objectionable. However, voluntary policies do not work at the high school level. The wearing

of uniforms might even make it easier to be a gang member, since school administrators would no longer be able to tell who was in a gang.

Some of the smartest, most creative students wear the most outlandish clothing and hairstyles. Students cannot be expected to be uniform and should not be categorized academically by the clothes they wear (Evans, 1996)

While violence stems from many causes: such as racial tensions, use of illegal drugs, and lack of security at home, school administrators consistently point to student dress as an important element in propagating violence at school. School officials have a responsibility to provide an education for students in a safe environment. In reaction to the increase in armed robbery and shootings over clothing and other gang dress, schools are establishing dress codes.

A review of school dress codes nation-wide reveals three distinct goals. First is the goal of individual preference. School administrators will not interfere with the right of students and their parents regarding their appearance except when their clothing choices affect the educational program of the school or the health and safety

of others. The second goal is personal hygiene or cleanliness. Usually this is stated as students should attend school clothed in a manner which is clean. The third goal is whether a student's dress and grooming are within the limits of generally accepted community standards. If the community supports uniforms, they usually are worn (John, 1992).

Since the 1960's, the American Civil Liberties Union has engaged part of its legal talent in champioining the rights of children against such forms of tyranny as dress codes in schools and inspections for guns and knives at the school door (Decter, 1991).

Uniform policies have drawn criticism from anti-poverty advocates because some school districts have not made funds available for poor children to purchase uniforms. Parents in some Baltimore schools with many low-income students have formed their own companies to make and sell moderately priced uniforms ((Gursky, 1996). In Baltimore uniforms are not mandatory, but most elementary students wear them. The uniform is backed by parents who are relieved by the clothing cost savings (Time, Sept'87).

Many students view the wearing of clothing as a form of expression which is protected under the constitution.

The Supreme Court has not ruled on the constitutionality of school uniforms. A federal court, in 1995, upheld a New Mexico school that blocked a student's baggy pants. The student contended the First Amendment protected his attire because it expressed his black identity. For dress to qualify as speech, it has to convey a specific message that just about anyone can understand. Federal courts have upheld school officials' prohibition of students attending the high school prom in clothes of the opposite sex, wearing T-shirts to school caricaturing administrators in an alcoholic stupor, wearing an earring in one ear lobe, and sporting T-shirts with vulgar words (Zirkel, Phi Delta Kappa, March'94).

In a recent federal district court in Illinois, Olesen v. Board of Education of School District No. 228, involving student dress restrictions, the court upheld a dress code that prohibited the wearing of earrings by male students. The dress code banned the wearing of earrings by male students or the wearing or display of any gang symbol. The court found the dress code a reasonable means of addressing the board's legitimate interest in curtailing gang activity (Majestic, 1991).

Hair and dress codes have not been a topic of much concern to school officials since the 1970s. However, with new concerns of school violence and efforts to reduce gang activity, dress codes are an issue again. The legal objections to dress codes are based on the First Amendment of the United States Constitution regarding the right to free expression. In the 1969 case Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, The Supreme Court ruled that as long as student dress, behavior, and speech does not interfere with or lead to a disruption of the educational process it can not be denied. This is interpreted as wearing gang clothing conveys a message to the rival gang members and sends a message to other of threats, fear, and intimidation. Therefor a school board would not be overreacting, when it adopts a dress code that does not allow for the wearing of gang clothing. The purpose would be to maintain a safe and secure school to facilitate effective learning (Lane, 1992).

In the 1986 case of Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser, the United States Supreme Court stated that the school board has a right to decide what is lewd, vulgar or unduly disruptive. In a 1984 study of the Chicago area by

Reverend Charles Kyle,Jr., gang intimidation was the primary reason for the area's 40 to 60 percent dropout rate.

Many students in the survey reported they were physically harmed by gangs. 80 percent of the students at a private Christian Academy cite gang intimidation as the reason they dropped out of the public high school. Violence in the public schools is on a steady rise. If school boards can show that gang attire substantially interferes with the learning environment then restrictions on gang-related clothing and symbols can probably be upheld. If the present trend continues, nearly all school districts will be forced to address gang problems at some point (Glukman, 96).

In Bannister v. Paradis (1970) a lower court ruled that the prohibition of clothing related to style and taste was unconstitutional unless such clothing imposed a danger to the health and safety of others or caused a disturbance or other disruption. In another case, Wallace v. Ford (1972), a lower court said a school could regulate the wearing of clothing that was considered immodest (Lane, 1994).

In Jeglin v. San Jacinto Unified School District (1993), a district court ruled that a school dress code that prohibited clothing identifying professional sports teams or

colleges violated the First Amendment speech rights of elementary and middle school students. The reasoning: the court found the school district had offered no proof of gang presence in its elementary schools and negligible proof at the middle school level, with no evidence of an actual or threatened disruption of school activities. The court upheld the dress code at the high school level saying that the school district had carried the burden of showing a gang presence resulting in intimidation of students and faculty and the potential of disruption (Lane, 1994).

In 1995, using the public forum analysis, an Arizona state judge upheld a strict mandatory uniform policy that provided for a no opt-out provision, in the Maricopa County Public schools. The judge also applied the First Amendment balancing test and found that the interests of the entire student body, which were furthered by the uniform policy, outweighed the defendant's free expression rights. School officials had to show that they had a reasonable expectation that the disputed attire would substantially disrupt or materially interfere with school operations, including appropriate discipline or violate the rights of other students. Courts often defer to school authorities and

simply require a showing that the dress is inconsistent with the edúcational mission of the school (Lane, 1994).

In the future, courts may find that mandatory uniforms supress students' free expression, but that the restriction is reasonable in the public school context. Because the policy deprives all students of expression equally, without regard to content, and because it serves an educational purpose unrelated to the content, courts will probably defer to the discretion of school officials on this policy (Poliokas, 1996).

The courts consistently have tended toward the view that school regulations must not intrude on the private rights of individuals beyond the minimum degree essential to the larger public purpose. A properly drawn dress code can serve several useful purposes: it can provide necessary safety regulations for schools, it can help students develop into responsible citizens, and it can serve as a helpful link between the school and the community. The courts will support a code as long as it can be proven that the guidelines are an integral part of the total school program and help to achieve the school's legitimate goals (Sparks, 1983), (Majestic, 1991).

Opponents of dress codes argue that they violate the First Amendment and the Liberty Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment by stifling individuality and restricting personal freedom. Surprisingly, school dress codes have been the topic of very few reported court decisions. Students have won a couple of victories. However, the courts for the most part were unreceptive and unsympathetic to the student challenges. Courts have given varying reasons for sustaining dress codes. Some simply refuse to recognize that dress and hair styles are kinds of "communication" protected by the First Amendment. Others agreed with students that dress codes can infringe their rights to freedom of expression and personal liberty, but ruled that the need for school discipline and classroom decorum outweighs these constitutional rights (Simpson, 1991).

To many people, uniforms are an appealing, easy to understand panacea for school violence. A dress code is an important part of the overall antigang effort, but it is far from the only component. Dress codes should be adaptable to changing styles and should be used in conjunction with other gang prevention programs (Trump, 1993). Codes that prohibit the wearing of gang attire and regalia should already be in place where this is a safety issue, and the

need to adopt a school uniform policy to solve that particular problem is irrelevant. If an inappropriate behavior can be attributed to a type of dress, the dress can be regulated (Lane, 1994).

The Virginia Department of Education (1992) deems these key elements to be necessary in initiating a school uniform program: have parents and the community involved, begin in the elementary schools, the program should be voluntary, and principals and faculties should be committed and enthusiastic about the program. Ivan Gluckman, legal counsel for the National Association of Secondary School Principals, states that to place restrictions on student dress, a school board must have a legitimate educational rational (Virginia State Department of Education, 1992).

Summary

The use of uniforms or strict dress codes has been seen as an answer to American parents who have waited for school boards to have the courage to stand up for higher standards of student dress, conduct, and academic achievement. Reasons for implementing a school uniform policy include the increase in the students' sense of pride in the school, improved self-image, reduction in the differences in socio-economic levels, reductions in crime,

and reduced clothing costs for families (Virginia State Department of Education, 1992). In schools where trespassers are a problem, those not wearing a uniform could be easily identified even at a distance. Wearing uniforms dimishes the students' ability to display gang emblems or colors on their clothing. A dress code for students create a reason for the staff to dress professionally (King, 1996) The teachers are models in everything they do, including the manner in which they dress. Professional dress is of major importance in winning respect in the classroom and in conveying the appropriate public image (Simmons, 1996).

Fans of uniforms or strict dress codes contend that uniforms: increase student attendance; cut down on distractions; increase student self-confidence and esteem; produce an espirit de corps among students; decrease clothing costs; improve classroom behaviors; remove some of the causes of school crime, violence, and gang activity; create greater school recognition; and increase academic performance. Critics see uniforms as an infringement of First Amendment rights, tools for administrative power, and an unnecessary economic hardship. Critics also feel that uniforms will not deter violence or gang activity, that social class distinction will remain, and that evidence to

support school uniforms is not statistically valid or reliable (Carnso, 1996).

Students and parents should help to develop and implement policies regarding dress codes and uniforms. Parents must actively manage and monitor how young people obtain money or clothing and accessories (LaPoint, 1992). Uniforms are no magic pill, our entire generation of children have grown up with no boundaries (McDaniel, 1996).

CHAPTER III

Methods and Procedures

Problems in public schools have become the new focus of the media. These problems range from students carrying guns to school and killing other students and/or teachers to students being physically assaulted for their shoes or other articles of clothing. Test scores are down and appear to be dropping each year with no end in sight. Parents blame teachers for not teaching the basics. Teachers blame parents for not teaching morals and not disciplining their children. Problems in education may bring both parents and teachers together. Both see the current trend of a uniform/strict dress code policy as a compromise to help each other focus on what is best for the children. If children are in uniforms or follow a strict dress code, their is no need to kill someone for what they wear since everyone is dressed alike. Children focus on academics and do not worry about their clothing. This helps improve test scores which pleases parents. Children seem to behave better and focus on assigned tasks and this pleases teachers.

The purpose of this research was to determine if a uniform/strict dress code policy in the elementary school would improve student behavior. After a review of the literature, it was hypothesized that a uniform/strict dress code policy would make a significant improvement in student behavior.

Subjects

Population and Sample

The population and sample both consisted of 44 elementary school teachers(grades three, four, and five) who taught at a public elementary school located in rural central Georgia in which no uniform/strict dress code policy existed. The 44 teachers, 41 women and three men, had teaching experiences ranging from one to 28 years. This population was chosen because the researcher had vested interest in their perceptions and a loose dress code policy was in place.

Variables

Independent Variable

The independent variable was a survey distributed by the researcher to the 44 elementary school teachers. Its purpose was to measure the teachers perceptions, feelings

and beliefs regarding the current loose dress code vs. a stricter dress code or uniform policy. The survey consisted of 20 specific opinion statements. These statements where formed by the researcher based on the review of literature and the current loose dress code in the school. These statements ranged from the teachers' feelings on the current dress code to their feelings on a voluntary school uniform. The survey was designed as a alternative form Likert Scale, in which the teachers were forced to strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The undecided response was omitted in an effort to force the teachers to take a stand on the issue.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable was the 20 item survey that was given to the teachers. A tally (see appendix for the complete tally) was done on the teachers' responses to each of the 20 items on the survey. A Chi-Square statistical analysis was performed on each of the 20 items. The Chi-Square statistical analysis compared the obtained frequencies to the expected frequencies and indicated the probability that they were different.

Procedures

The researcher, after reviewing the literature, composed the 20 item survey. The researcher took this survey to the elementary school principal at the pilot site for perusal. The principal, seeing no need for changes, called the Superintendent of the school and asked for permission to distribute the survey to the 44 teachers. The Superintendent gave permission to do so and the Superintendent asked for a copy of the results from the survey. The surveys were handed out at the next faculty meeting. All 44 surveys were passed out and 41 surveys, or 93%, were returned to the researcher. There were no names on the surveys.

Several factors could have affected the validity of the survey. The respondents had to cooperate when completing the survey in order for the researcher to have at least 80% returned. The respondents could affect the validity of the questionnaire in the following ways: if they did not respond to what was actually the case regarding their perceptions, if they reported what they thought should be, or if they responded with what they thought the researcher would like to hear. Last, the respondents had to sincerely

now how they felt and thought in order to report it on the survey.

Data Analysis

The Chi-Square statistical analysis was used to interpret the results to the responses given by the teachers on the survey. A Chi-Square analysis is a statistical analysis used to analyze one, two, or more nominal variables, and it compares obtained frequencies to expected frequencies and indicates the probability that they are different. A one-dimensional Chi-Square analysis was utilized on each of the 20 items on the survey to determine the frequency in which teachers believed there was a need for a strict dress code or voluntary uniform policy to improve student behavior.

CHAPTER IV

Results and Discussion

The researcher examined the perceptions of elementary (grades 3-5) teachers regarding the need for a stricter dress code or school uniform policy in their school. In May, 1997, a survey designed to measure the perceptions toward student dress codes was developed after reviewing and analyzing the limited available professional and non-professional literature concerning the use of dress codes/student uniforms in elementary schools. After permission to conduct the survey was granted by the Superintendent of the selected central Georgia school district, the one rural elementary school in the school district was used for the survey.

The Likert Scale survey was distributed during faculty meeting at the selected school. The survey consisted of 20 items that dealt with the current student dress code and asked if a need for a stricter dress code or uniform policy was foreseeable. The response was made on an alternate form Likert Scale in which teachers were forced to choose one of the following responses: (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) disagree, (4) strongly disagree. The undecided was intentionally left out in order to avoid acquiescence

response bias on the part of the respondents. A total of 44 surveys were handed out, and 41 out of the 44 or 93.18% were completed and returned.

The hypothesis of this study was that teachers perceived that students' behavior would improve when a stricter dress code or voluntary uniform policy was implemented. A one-dimensional Chi-Square statistical analysis was performed on each of the 20 items on the questionnaire to determine the frequency in which teachers believe that a stricter dress code/voluntary uniform policy would improve students' behavior. Of the 20 statement analyses, 18 revealed a significant difference using the Alpha Level of .05 in the teachers' responses, with 7 being significant at or above .01 level and 9 being significant at the .001 level. (See Table 1). Items 1 and 8 were not significant.

Furthermore, in choices of answers as shown by Table 2, on the 20 item statements, the percentages were higher on 15 of the statements in the strongly agree or agree than those that disagree. Therefore, the hypothesis was upheld because the statistical analysis of the teachers' responses to the questionnaire showed they did perceive that student

behavior and academic performance would improve if a stricter dress code/voluntary uniform policy was in place and enforced as opposed to the current dress code which they feel is not enforced.

In response to Item 1, "I am happy with our current student dress code", there was no significant difference. There were 4 teachers who strongly agreed and 13 who agreed, while 15 disagreed and 9 strongly disagreed.

In Item 2, "The student dress code at our school is enforced", there was a significant difference. There were 2 teachers who strongly agreed and 15 who agreed, while 14 disagreed and 10 strongly disagreed. The 2 teachers who strongly agreed and 14 strongly disagreed response caused the significant difference.

In Item 3, "I think students and teachers should have the same dress code", there was a significant difference. No one responded to strongly agree, however 11 teachers did agree. Thirty teachers were in disagreement, including 13 who disagreed and 17 who strongly disagreed. The 0 for strongly agree and 17 who strongly disagree contributed to the significant differences in choices of answers.

The factor contributing most to the significant difference in item 4, "I think the basic dress code should

TABLE 1

Elementary School Teachers' Perceptions Toward A Strict Dress Code/Voluntary Uniform Policy

Questionnaire Item	chi-square Analysis	Level of Significance
1. Current Dress Code	6.902	p<.10
2. Enforce Dress Code	10.220	p<.02
3. Same Dress Code Student and Teachers	15.488	p<.01
4. System Wide Dress Code	15.098	p<.01
5. Administrators Should Enforce Dress Code	37.341	p<.001
6. Prohibit Gang Clothing	69.146	p<.001
7. All T-Shirts Not School Related	25.049	p<.001
8. Shirts Tucked in With Belt	5.537	p< .20
9. Students Worry About Clothing Not Academics	17.634	p<.001
10. Punish If Dress Code Violated	21.146	p<.001
11. Committe Decide Dress Code	33.634	p<.001
12. Strict Dress Code Clothing	18.415	p<.001
13. Favor Strict Dress Code	16.463	p>.001
14. School Uniform Clothing	36.951	p<.001
15. Favor School Uniform	14.122	p<.01

TABLE 1 Continued

Questionnaire Item	Chi-Square Analysis	Level of Significance
16. Legislation for Mandatory Uniform	9.634	p<.05
17. Uniforms Save Money	10.220	p<.02
18. Students More Understanding Dress Alike	8.268	p<.05
19. Classroom Behavior	15.098	p<.01
20. Discipline Would Improve	14.512	p<.01

Degrees of Freedom for all 20 items = (C-1) = (4-1) = 3

* Not Significant

TABLE 2

Percentage Analysis of Questionnaire Statements

Questionnaire Item	SA	A	D	SD
1	9.7%	31.7%	36.5%	21.9%
2	4.8%	36.5%	34.1%	24.3%
3	0%	26.8%	31.7%	41.4%
4	31.7%	46.3%	14.6%	7.3%
5	51.2%	46.3%	2.4%	0%
6	80.4%	14.6%	4.8%	0%
7	9.7%	17.0%	58.5%	14.6%
8	29.2%	26.3%	34.1%	9.7%
9	34.1%	43.9%	21.9%	0%
10	24.3%	53.6%	17.0%	4.8%
11	46.3%	48.7%	4.8%	0%
12	19.5%	51.2%	24.3%	4.8%
13	14.6%	43.9%	36.5%	4.8%
14	14.6%	65.8%	12.1%	7.3%
15	17.0%	48.7%	24.3%	9.7%
16	12.1%	31.7%	41.4%	14.6%
17	34.1%	36.5%	24.3%	4.8%
18	24.3%	41.4%	24.3%	9.7%
19	31.7%	43.9%	21.9%	2.4%
20	29.2%	43.9%	24.3%	2.4%

* Note: All percentages were rounded to the nearest tenth.

SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree

be the same for all schools in the system", was 32 out of 41 teachers responded in the strongly agree or agree category. There were 6 teachers who disagreed and 3 who strongly disagreed.

Item 5, "School administrators should enforce student and teacher dress codes", was significant with 40 teachers responding in the strongly agree or agree category. Only one new teacher disagreed. No one strongly disagreed.

Again, Item 6, "Busting slack and gang clothing (including starter jackets and bandannas) should be prohibited", was significant with 39 teachers responding in the strongly agree or agree category. Two teachers disagreed and no one strongly disagreed.

In Item 7, "All T-shirts that are not school related should be prohibited", was significant. 30 teachers responded in the disagree or strongly disagreed category. Four teachers strongly agreed while 7 teachers agreed. The significant difference in choices of answers was due to the 7 teachers who agreed and the 24 who disagreed.

In response to Item 8, "Shirts should be worn tucked into pants or shorts worn with a belt", there was no significant difference in the responses. There were 12

responses in the strongly agree and 11 in the agree categories, while 14 disagreed and 4 strongly disagreed.

The two responses contributing to the significant difference in Item 9, "Students spend to much time worrying about what to wear or how they look instead of academics", were the strongly agree and agree categories. 32 teachers responded to these two categories with 9 responding to the disagree response and no one responding to the strongly disagree.

In Item 10, "Students who violate dress codes should be punished", there was a significant difference. Ten teachers responded in the strongly agree category and 22 teachers agreed. There were 9 teachers who disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed. The agree and strongly disagree caused the significant difference in the choices of answers.

Another significant difference was found in Item 11, "A student - teacher - parent committee should decide the dress code or uniform for the school". Out of the responses, 19 teachers strongly agreed and no one strongly disagreed.

Item 12, "A strict dress code could consist of a shirt with a collar or a school T-shirt tucked into shorts, pants, or skirt fitted at the waist with a belt", had a significant

difference. A total of 29 teachers responded in the strongly agree or agree category. Ten teachers disagreed and two strongly disagreed. The difference between the agree and disagree contributed to the significant in the choices of answer.

Again in Item 13, "I favor a strict dress code", there was a significant difference. Six teachers strongly agreed and 18 agreed for a total of 24 in agreement. Those who did not agree included 15 in disagreement and 2 who strongly disagreed. The response that contributed the least was the strongly disagree response.

In Item 14, "A school uniform could consist of solid color pants, skirts, shorts, or jumpers with a collared white shirt. A sweatshirt, sweater or jacket in the designated school color could be worn.", was significant with 33 teachers responding in the strongly agree or agree categories. Five teachers disagreed and three strongly disagreed. The significant difference was due to the 27 who agreed.

Another significant difference was found in Item 15, "I favor a school uniform". 7 teachers strongly agreed and 20 agreed, while 10 teachers disagreed and 14 teachers strongly disagreed. The significance in the responding was

due to the difference between the agree and disagree categories.

In Item 16, "I think legislation should be changed to allow for a mandatory school uniform", those in disagreement made for the significant difference. Only five teachers strongly agreed and 13 agreed, while 17 teachers disagreed and 6 strongly disagreed. Those in the strongly agree and strongly disagree categories made the significant difference.

On Item 17, "School uniforms would save parents money". Of those responding 14 strongly agreed and 15 agreed with 10 teachers disagreeing and 2 teachers strongly disagreeing.

In Item 18, "Students would be more understanding of cultural, ethnic, and economic differences if dressed alike", the significant difference can be contributed to the 10 strongly agree and 4 who strongly disagreed. There were 17 in agreement and 10 in disagreement.

Those in the strongly disagree category contributed the most to Item 19, "Classroom behaviors would improve if students were dressed professionally". A total of 31 teachers were in the agreement categories with 9 teachers disagreeing and only one in the strongly disagree category.

In Item 20, "Discipline would improve if a strict dress code or uniform policy was enforced". There were 30 teachers in the strongly agree or agreement categories with 10 in disagreement. Only one teacher strongly disagreed and this contributed to the significant difference in the responses.

The teachers' responses to the 20 item analyses revealed that Items 1 and 8 were not significant at the .05 Alpha Level, Items 2, 16, 17, and 18 were significant at the .05 level or above. Items 3, 4, 15, 19, and 20 were more significant at the .01 level. And the most significant at the .001 level were Items 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. This leads the researcher to conclude that the hypothesis that teachers perceived student behavior would improve and academic performance would increase when a stricter dress code or voluntary uniform policy was implemented was upheld.

CHAPTER V

Summary and Conclusions

Upon collection and analysis of the 41 completed surveys, the researcher found that of the 20 statement, 18 showed significant differences at the $p<.05$ level or higher among the attitudes of elementary teachers. These 18 items upheld the hypothesis that teachers perceived student behavior would improve and academic performance would increase when a stricter dress code or voluntary uniform policy was implemented.

The teachers felt that the current dress code at their school was not enforced. They did not want teachers to have the same dress code as students, but they did want the same dress code system wide. They wanted the administration to enforce the dress code. They wanted gang clothing prohibited. They did not want T-shirts that are not school related prohibited. They agreed that students spend too much time worrying about what to wear or how they look instead of academics. They wanted students punished who violate dress codes. They thought that a student-teacher-parent committee should decide the dress code or uniform for the school. They agreed that a strict dress code could

consist of a shirt with a collar or a school T-shirt tucked into shorts, pants, or skirt fitted at the waist with a belt. They favored a strict dress code. They agreed that a school uniform could consist of solid color pants, skirts, shorts, or jumpers with a collared white shirt. More favored a school uniform than the stricter dress code. They disagreed with legislation to mandate school uniforms. They agreed that uniforms would save parents money. They agreed that students would be more understanding of cultural, ethnic, and economic differences if dressed alike. They agreed that classroom behaviors would improve if students were dressed professionally. Also, they agreed discipline would improve if a strict dress code or uniform policy was enforced.

These beliefs reinforced the researcher's assumptions that the teachers responded truthfully to the questionnaire items, because teachers are professionals and realized the importance of valid educational research. All the teachers responding to the survey had teaching experience, ranging from one year or more. The researcher feels satisfied with the teachers' educational experience at the elementary school where the research was conducted. The school had a

dress code in place, but it was not seen as enforced by the teachers.

This survey was developed to investigate the attitudes of elementary teachers at a central Georgia elementary school. Even though the findings of this study might not be generalized to other schools across the nation or even others schools within the same school district due to the fact that the population was not representative of a random sample, they do lend support to the current body of literature which suggests the implementation of a voluntary uniform/strict dress code policy in public elementary school. The findings show a uniform or strict dress code policy aids in reducing the number of student behavior problems and increases student academic performance. This research offers educators further data in favor of implementing a voluntary uniform/strict dress code policy to help improve discipline and improve academic performance.

The results of this research indicate that teachers perceived that students would behave better and work harder on academics, if they were dressed professionally. Therefore, if having a voluntary uniform or strict dress code could increase academics and improve behavior, perhaps

educators should consider implementing this in all public elementary schools in the nation.

Future research studies related to teachers' perceptions of the effect of a voluntary uniform/strict dress code policy has on student behavior and academic performance, might include a larger sample of teachers than the sample used in this study. However, there are a limited number of research studies on this subject at present. This needs further investigation, if a voluntary uniform or strict dress code policy at the elementary level could help students behave better and improve their academic performance, many problems faced in the middle school and high school years would be obliterated.

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Appendix A

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As you know, I am working on my Specialist Degree at Mercer University. I am doing a survey of the teachers at Elementary School. This is to determine feelings about the effectiveness of dress codes and school uniforms. Please take a few minutes to fill out this survey. I need your help for my project. Please return to me by Friday, June 6.

As always your help is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

Jackie Padgett

Jackie Padgett

This survey is to determine your feelings about the effectiveness of student dress codes or voluntary student uniforms. Please circle the answer that best describes your feelings.

Key:

SA= I strongly agree.
A= I somewhat agree.
D= I somewhat disagree.
SD= I strongly disagree.

SA	A	D	SD	1	I am happy with our current student dress code
SA	A	D	SD	2	The student dress code at our school is enforced
SA	A	D	SD	3	I think students and teachers should have the same dress code
SA	A	D	SD	4	I think the basic dress code should be the same for all schools in the system
SA	A	D	SD	5	School administrators should enforce student and teacher dress codes
SA	A	D	SD	6	"Busting slack" and gang clothing (including Starter jackets and bandannas) should be prohibited
SA	A	D	SD	7	All T-shirts that are not school related should be prohibited
SA	A	D	SD	8	Shirts should be worn tucked into pants or shorts worn with a belt
SA	A	D	SD	9	Students spend to much time worrying about what to wear or how they look instead of academics
SA	A	D	SD	10	Students who violate dress codes should be punished
SA	A	D	SD	11	A student-teacher-parent committee should decide the dress code or uniform for the school
SA	A	D	SD	12	A strict dress code could consist of a shirt with a collar or a school T-shirt tucked into shorts, pants, or skirt fitted at the waist with a belt

SA	A	D	SD	13	I favor a strict dress code
SA	A	D	SD	14	A school uniform could consist of solid color pants, skirts, shorts, or jumpers worn with a collared white shirt A sweatshirt, sweater or jacket in the designated school color could be worn
SA	A	D	SD	15	I favor a school uniform
SA	A	D	SD	16	I think legislation should be changed to allow for a mandatory school uniform
SA	A	D	SD	17	School uniforms would save parents money
SA	A	D	SD	18	Students would be more understanding of cultural, ethnic, and economic differences if dressed alike
SA	A	D	SD	19	Classroom behaviors would improve if students were dressed professionally
SA	A	D	SD	20	Discipline would improve if a strict dress code or uniform policy was enforced

Appendix B

TALLY SHEET

This survey is to determine your feelings about the effectiveness of student dress codes or voluntary student uniforms. Please circle the answer that best describes your feelings

Key

SA= I strongly agree.
A= I somewhat agree.
D= I somewhat disagree.
SD= I strongly disagree.

SA	A	D	SD	1 I am happy with our current student dress code
4	13	15	4	
SA	A	D	SD	2 The student dress code at our school is enforced
2	15	14	10	
SA	A	D	SD	3 I think students and teachers should have the same dress code
0	11	13	17	
SA	A	D	SD	4 I think the basic dress code should be the same for all schools in the system
13	19	6	3	
SA	A	D	SD	5 School administrators should enforce student and teacher dress codes
21	19	1	0	
SA	A	D	SD	6 "Busting slack" and gang clothing (including Starter jackets and bandannas) should be prohibited
33	6	2	0	
SA	A	D	SD	7 All T-shirts that are not school related should be prohibited
4	7	24	6	
SA	A	D	SD	8 Shirts should be worn tucked into pants or shorts worn with a belt
12	11	14	4	
SA	A	D	SD	9 Students spend to much time worrying about what to wear or how they look instead of academics
14	18	9	0	
SA	A	D	SD	10 Students who violate dress codes should be punished
10	22	7	2	
SA	A	D	SD	11 A student-teacher-parent committee should decide the dress code or uniform for the school
19	20	2	0	
SA	A	D	SD	12 A strict dress code could consist of a shirt with a collar or a school T-shirt tucked into shorts, pants, or skirt fitted at the waist with a belt
8	21	10	2	

SA	A	D	SD		
6	18	15	2	13	I favor a strict dress code
SA	A	D	SD	14	A school uniform could consist of solid color pants, skirts, shorts, or jumpers worn with a collared white shirt A sweatshirt, sweater or jacket in the designated school color could be worn
6	27	5	3		
SA	A	D	SD	15	I favor a school uniform
7	20	10	4		
SA	A	D	SD	16	I think legislation should be changed to allow for a mandatory school uniform
5	13	17	6		
SA	A	D	SD	17	School uniforms would save parents money
14	15	10	2		
SA	A	D	SD	18	Students would be more understanding of cultural, ethnic, and economic differences if dressed alike
10	17	10	4		
SA	A	D	SD	19	Classroom behaviors would improve if students were dressed professionally
13	18	19	1		
SA	A	D	SD	20	Discipline would improve if a strict dress code or uniform policy was enforced
12	18	10	1		